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EXAMINER

NGUYEN, ANH T

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2127

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DATE MAILED: 02/27/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Applicati n No.

09/848,985

Applicant(s)

BOCIONED ET AL.

Examiner

Anh T Nguyen

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 May 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 2.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-21 are presented for examination.

Claim Objections

2. In claims 2-11, "A method" should be amended to "The method" for proper dependency.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claims 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 10, the step of re-ordering is performed "in response to collated user preference data". However, this data has not been provided in the claimed method. Applicant should positively recite the provision of this data prior to re-ordering.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

6. Claims 1-10, and 12-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Ceretta et al., USPN 6,370,355 (hereinafter Ceretta).

As per independent claims 1 and 21, Ceretta teaches an Internet compatible user interface system supporting a process including a sequence of subtasks, a method comprising the steps of:

initiating display of a composite window representing a plurality of overlaid tabbed web page windows each including a visible tab incorporating an identifier identifying a function provided by a web page associated with a particular subtask of said sequence of subtasks and wherein visible tabs and corresponding overlaid tabbed windows are sequentially ordered in accordance with said sequence of subtasks (FIG.5; *identifier shown as menu options at top of interface, e.g. "Home", "Live Help", "Search", etc.*); and

initiating display of a subtask web page in the foreground of said composite window in response to user selection of a visible tab corresponding to said subtask web page (FIG.5, *e.g.subtask "Home" being reflected in composite window*).

As per claim 2, which is dependent on claim 1, Ceretta teaches initiating display of command menu items supporting at least one function of, (a) ordering tabbed web pages, (b) entering identifier data for incorporation in a visible tab, (c) providing a template tabbed web page sequence, and (d) assigning a tabbed web page sequence to particular web page universal resource locators (URLs) (col.5, lines 55-57, 60-62).

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As per claim 3, which is dependent on claim 1, Ceretta teaches wherein said Internet compatible user interface system comprises a web browser (col.5, line 43).

As per claim 4, which is dependent on claim 1, **and as per claim 20 which has the same scope as claim 4**, Ceretta teaches wherein said sequence of subtasks comprises a workflow process including at least two functions from (a) browsing web pages, (b) searching for information, (c) configuring web page features, (d) providing capability to contact a human agent and (e) initiating a commercial transaction (FIG.5, *web pages being browsed as well as a "Search" option*).

As per claim 5, which is dependent on claim 1, Ceretta teaches wherein said sequence of subtasks comprises a workflow process supporting at least two functions from, (a) browsing for educational course offerings, (b) searching for information about a course of a selected course provider, (c) enrolling in an online educational course, (d) learning about a specific course curriculum, (e) accessing a selected course, (f) providing course practice exercises and (g) obtaining course credit (FIG.5, col.12, lines 27-30).

As per claim 6, which is dependent on claim 1, Ceretta teaches wherein said identifier comprises at least one of (a) text and (b) a symbol (FIG.5)

As per claim 7, which is dependent on claim 1, Ceretta teaches wherein said visible tab is at least one of, (a) incorporated in a window used for displaying a retrieved web page and (b) embedded within said web page associated with a particular subtask of said sequence of subtasks (FIG.5, *"Home" web page is incorporated in a window*).

As per claim 8, which is dependent on claim 1, **and as per claim 18**, Ceretta teaches wherein said composite window supports a plurality of concurrently operating Internet based applications each corresponding to one of said plurality of overlaid tabbed web page windows (FIG.5, *different applications associated with their respective menu options at the top interface*).

As per claim 9, which is dependent on claim 1, **and as per claims 16 and 17 which have the same scope as claims 1 and 9**, Ceretta teaches sharing context information between subtasks corresponding to different overlaid tabbed web pages, said context information comprising at least one of, (a) user identification information, (b) user authorization information, and (c) commercial transaction related information (FIG.5, col.10, *login*, lines 5-7).

As per claim 10, which is dependent on claim 1, Ceretta teaches the step of in response to collated user preference data, adaptively re-ordering at least one of, (a) said overlaid tabbed web page windows and (b) functions provided by a web page associated with a particular subtask (FIG.5, col.9, lines 64-65).

As per claims 12 and 19, Ceretta teaches a user interface system supporting management of a workflow including a sequence of subtasks, comprising:

a first menu for use in assigning individual subtasks of said sequence to corresponding hierarchically ordered tabbed web page windows (col.5, lines 55-58); and

a composite window representing said overlaid tabbed web page windows each including a visible tab incorporating an identifier identifying a function provided by a web page associated with a particular subtask of said sequence of subtasks and wherein visible tabs and corresponding

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overlaid tabbed windows are sequentially ordered in accordance with said sequence of subtasks (FIG.5)

As per claim 13, which is dependent on claim 12, Ceretta teaches a second menu for use in entering identifier data for incorporation in a visible tab (col.5, lines 63-65).

As per claim 14, which is dependent on claim 12, Ceretta teaches a second menu for use in allocating web page universal resource locators (URLs) to corresponding windows of said overlaid tabbed web page windows (col.5, lines 63-65).

Claim 15, which is dependent on claim 12, is similar to claim 3, and is therefore rejected because as set forth above, Ceretta teaches wherein said Internet compatible user interface system comprises a web browser (col.5, line 43).

7. Claims 1-4, 6-10, and 12-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Bertram et al., USPN 6,049,812 (hereinafter Bertram).

Bertram teaches a method in an Internet compatible user interface system supporting a process including a sequence of subtasks. Bertram's method reads on the claimed method for the reasons set forth below.

As per independent claims 1 and 21, Bertram teaches an Internet compatible user interface system supporting a process including a sequence of subtasks, a method comprising the steps of:

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initiating display of a composite window representing a plurality of overlaid tabbed web page windows (FIG.4, *content window 11*, col.7, lines 10-12) each including a visible tab incorporating an identifier identifying a function provided by a web page associated with a particular subtask of said sequence of subtasks (FIG. 4, *marked tabs 13*, col.7, line 41) and wherein visible tabs and corresponding overlaid tabbed windows are sequentially ordered in accordance with said sequence of subtasks (col.3, lines 9-10, line 18); and

initiating display of a subtask web page in the foreground of said composite window in response to user selection of a visible tab corresponding to said subtask web page (col.8, lines 8-9).

As per claim 2, which is dependent on claim 1, Bertram teaches initiating display of command menu items supporting at least one function of, (a) ordering tabbed web pages, (b) entering identifier data for incorporation in a visible tab, (c) providing a template tabbed web page sequence, and (d) assigning a tabbed web page sequence to particular web page universal resource locators (URLs) (FIG.6, col.7, lines 65-66).

As per claim 3, which is dependent on claim 1, Bertram teaches wherein said Internet compatible user interface system comprises a web browser (col.16, line 3).

As per claim 4, which is dependent on claim 1, **and as per claim 20 which has the same scope as claim 4**, Bertram teaches wherein said sequence of subtasks comprises a workflow process including at least two functions from (a) browsing web pages, (b) searching for information, (c) configuring web page features, (d) providing capability to contact a human agent and (e) initiating a commercial transaction (col.15, line14-15).

As per claim 6, which is dependent on claim 1, Bertram teaches wherein said identifier comprises at least one of (a) text and (b) a symbol (FIG.4, *marked tabs 13*)

As per claim 7, which is dependent on claim 1, Bertram teaches wherein said visible tab is at least one of, (a) incorporated in a window used for displaying a retrieved web page and (b) embedded within said web page associated with a particular subtask of said sequence of subtasks (FIG.6).

As per claim 8, which is dependent on claim 1, **and as per claim 18**, Bertram teaches wherein said composite window supports a plurality of concurrently operating Internet based applications each corresponding to one of said plurality of overlaid tabbed web page windows (FIG.4, col.4, lines 33-35).

As per claim 9, which is dependent on claim 1, **and as per claims 16 and 17 which have the same scope as claims 1 and 9**, Bertram teaches sharing context information between subtasks corresponding to different overlaid tabbed web pages, said context information comprising at least one of, (a) user identification information, (b) user authorization information, and (c) commercial transaction related information (FIG.1A1, col.12, lines 66-67).

As per claim 10, which is dependent on claim 1, Bertram teaches the step of in response to collated user preference data, adaptively re-ordering at least one of, (a) said overlaid tabbed web page windows and (b) functions provided by a web page associated with a particular subtask (FIG.1A1, col.15, lines 13-15).

As per claims 12 and 19, Bertram teaches a user interface system supporting management of a workflow including a sequence of subtasks, comprising:

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a first menu for use in assigning individual subtasks of said sequence to corresponding hierarchically ordered tabbed web page windows (FIG.4); and

a composite window representing said overlaid tabbed web page windows each including a visible tab incorporating an identifier identifying a function provided by a web page associated with a particular subtask of said sequence of subtasks and wherein visible tabs and corresponding overlaid tabbed windows are sequentially ordered in accordance with said sequence of subtasks (13, FIG.4)

As per claim 13, which is dependent on claim 12, Bertram teaches a second menu for use in entering identifier data for incorporation in a visible tab (FIG.6, col.7, lines 64-66).

As per claim 14, which is dependent on claim 12, Bertram teaches a second menu for use in allocating web page universal resource locators (URLs) to corresponding windows of said overlaid tabbed web page windows (FIG.6, *Setup Tab*).

Claim 15, which is dependent on claim 12, is similar to claim 3, and is therefore rejected because as set forth above, Bertram teaches wherein said Internet compatible user interface system comprises a web browser (col.16, line 3).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person

having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

9. Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bertram in view of Ceretta et al., USPN 6,370,355 (hereinafter Ceretta).

10. **As per claim 5**, which is dependent on claim 1, Bertram teaches the method substantially as claimed as set forth above. Bertram does not teach wherein said sequence of subtasks comprises a workflow process supporting at least two functions from, (a) browsing for educational course offerings, (b) searching for information about a course of a selected course provider, (c) enrolling in an online educational course, (d) learning about a specific course curriculum, (e) accessing a selected course, (f) providing course practice exercises and (g) obtaining course credit.

Ceretta teaches an Internet compatible user interface system having a sequence of subtasks, wherein said sequence of subtasks comprises a workflow process supporting at least two functions from, (a) browsing for educational course offerings, (b) searching for information about a course of a selected course provider, (c) enrolling in an online educational course, (d) learning about a specific course curriculum, (e) accessing a selected course, (f) providing course practice exercises and (g) obtaining course credit (FIG.5, col.12, lines 27-30). This workflow process is taught to facilitate student on-line registration and learning.

It would have been *prima facie* obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include in the method and system of Bertram, the workflow process supporting an online learning system of Ceretta for the purpose of providing interactive

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educational tools at the convenience of the end-user (col.2, lines 38-40). One skilled in the art would have been motivated to do so to allow Bertram's system and method to be used in student on-line registration and learning with a reasonable expectation of success.

11. Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bertram as view of Fang et al., USPN 6,628,311.

As per claim 11, which is dependent on claim 1, Bertram teaches wherein, a first subtask comprises a plurality of subsidiary subtasks and a plurality of overlaid tabbed web page windows.

However, Bertram does not teach initiating display of a second composite window representing a second plurality of overlaid tabbed web page windows each including an identifier identifying a function provided by a web page associated with a subsidiary subtask of said plurality of subsidiary subtasks in response to user selection of a visible tab associated with said first subtask.

Fang teaches initiating display of a second composite window representing a second plurality overlaid tabbed page windows (i.e. nested tabbed windows) (FIG.3c, col.4, lines 7-8, 14-15) each including a visible tab incorporating an identifier identifying a function associated with a subsidiary subtask.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include the use of nested tabbed windows corresponding to subtasks representing web page windows because it facilitates navigation between web pages.

12. Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ceretta, USPN 6,370,355 (hereinafter Ceretta) in view of Fang et al., USPN 6,628,311.

As per claim 11, which is dependent on claim 1, Ceretta teaches wherein, a first subtask comprises a plurality of subsidiary subtasks, including the step of initiating display of a second composite window representing a plurality of web page windows each including an identifier identifying a function provided by a web page associated with a subsidiary subtask of said plurality of subsidiary subtasks in response to user selection of a visible tab associated with said first subtask (FIG.5).

However, Ceretta does not teach that the plurality of web page windows is displayed as overlaid tabs.

Fang teaches initiating display of a second composite window representing a second plurality overlaid tabbed page windows (i.e. nested tabbed windows) (FIG.3c, col.4, lines 7-8, 14-15) each including a visible tab incorporating an identifier identifying a function associated with a subsidiary subtask.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include the use of nested tabbed windows corresponding to subtasks representing web page windows because allows the user easy access to the desired task/function without extensive navigation between web pages.

Conclusion

13. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Cragun et al., USPN 6,359,634 teaches graphical user interface using tabbed dialog.

DeNicola et al., USPN 6,288,753 teaches Internet-based distance learning.

Kulkarni et al., USPN 6,310,630 teaches an Internet web browser history using nested

McIlwaine et al., USPN 6,301,573 teaches a training system with a user interface comprising nested tabs.

Miller et al., USPN 6,587,668 teaches an online integrated training system.

14. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Anh T Nguyen whose telephone number is (703) 305-8649. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 7:00am-4:00pm.


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Meng-Ai An, can be reached on (703) 305-9678. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 306-5484.

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Anh T. Nguyen 
Art Unit 2127
February 23, 2004


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